

eastern kingsnake *Lampropeltis getula*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Family: Colubridae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The eastern kingsnake averages 36 to 48 inches in length. It has shiny, smooth scales. The head is a little wider than the neck. The sides and back are black, and all or nearly all of the scales have a small, light dot in them. The belly coloration is black and yellow in a checked pattern.

BEHAVIORS

The eastern kingsnake may be found in the southern half of the state, mainly in the Shawnee National Forest and in bluffs along the Mississippi River. It lives in dry, rocky hills, open woods and stream valleys. Mating occurs in spring. From 8-12 eggs are laid in rotting wood in June. Eggs hatch in August or September. This species is a predator of other reptiles, including snakes, birds and small mammals.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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